

(b) distilling said lower phase to provide (i) a distillate comprising at least a portion of the most volatile compounds and (ii) a distillation bottoms comprising the diacids formed and the catalyst;

(c) separating the catalyst from the distillation bottoms;

(d) conducting a reducing and/or oxidizing purification treatment of the adipic acid in an aqueous solution;

(e) crystallizing the adipic acid from water, preceding or following purification step (d), if crystallization has not been carried out in order to separate the catalyst from the distillation bottoms; and

(f) recrystallizing the adipic acid from water.

5. **(Twice Amended)** The process according to claim 1, wherein the stage of distillation of the lower phase is carried out so that the unconverted cyclohexane still present in this lower phase and the solvent are separated from the adipic acid.

12. **(Twice Amended)** The process according to claim 10, wherein the catalyst comprises at least one metal from group VIII of the Periodic Table of Elements, optionally deposited on a solid support.

14. **(Twice Amended)** The process according to claim 13, wherein the treatment with nitric acid is carried out by heating the mixture at a temperature of 25°C to 120°C.

15. **(Twice Amended)** The process according to claim 13, wherein the treatment with nitric acid is carried out in the presence of a catalyst comprising one or more cobalt, copper and/or vanadium compounds.

Please add new claims 21-22 as follows:

21. **(New)** The process according to claim 1, wherein the most volatile compounds are selected from the group consisting of the organic solvent, water, unconverted cyclohexane, cyclohexanone, cyclohexanol, cyclohexyl esters and lactones.

22. **(New)** The process according to claim 1, wherein step (c) is carried out by crystallization from water, by electrodialysis or by passing over an ion-exchange resin after dissolution of the distillation bottoms in water, by washing with water or by liquid-liquid extraction.

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, and re-examination and reconsideration of the subject application, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. § 1.112, in view of the amendments above and the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

By the above amendments, claims 1, 5, 12, 14, and 15 have been amended. Claims 21-22 have been added. Thus, upon entry of the foregoing amendments, claims 1-22 will be pending in the application. Each of these claims is under consideration.